

# National Religious Apostasy (4)

by Albert N. Martin

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of national repentance and reformation in response to the sins of moral degeneracy and religious apostasy, highlighting the consequences of rejecting the living fountain of the knowledge of God.*

**Duration:** 1:15:13

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 7:14, Proverbs 14:34, Isaiah 59:2, Jeremiah 18:8, Matthew 6:33, Romans 1:28, 1 John 1:9

**Topics:** "Apostasy"

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## Description

In this sermon on 'God's Word to Our Nation,' the speaker focuses on the theme of righteousness and sin in relation to a nation. The key scripture used is Proverbs 14:34, which states that righteousness exalts a nation while sin is a reproach. The speaker emphasizes the need for denouncing national sins and calling for repentance and reformation. Two major sins highlighted are moral degeneracy, particularly the sins of murder and sexual perversion, and religious apostasy, which is turning away from the principles of revealed religion. The sermon emphasizes God's detestation of apostasy and the consequences that follow.

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## Transcript

The vast and weighty theme which has occupied our minds in these evening sessions this week has been entitled, God's Word to Our Nation. And after giving a biblical setting and a scriptural justification for this subject, I proceeded to assert that perhaps no text is more relevant as setting the framework for God's Word to our nation than is Proverbs 14 and verse 34, in which we read, Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. And in the light of this text, then surely the Word of God to our nation in this hour must primarily be a word on the one hand of denunciation for our national sins, and on the other hand a call to national repentance and reformation from our sins.

Using the analogy of a mountain range, I've suggested that the sins of any nation are likened unto foothill sins, sins that constitute the main bulk and spine of the mountain range. But then there are those sins that rise up in their height above all others, like some of the mighty mountain peaks in the great ranges of mountains on the face of the earth. And I have suggested that two of these mountain peak sins of our nation are the sins of our putrid moral degeneracy and of our horrible religious apostasy.

And under that former head of our putrid sins of moral degeneracy, none are greater than the sins of the unrequited blood of the murdered multitudes and the sins of unrestrained and unashamed sensuality and

sexual perversion. Now tonight we move to consider the second mountain. Not only is our nation marked by the mountain of the sins of putrid moral degeneracy, but also by our sins of horrible religious apostasy.

Now for you children and young people for whom the word apostasy may be a new word or one concerning which you do not have a clear understanding as to its meaning, apostasy means basically to fall away, to depart from the recognition and submission of and to certain fundamental biblical truths and principles. So apostasy assumes that one has been in a condition of belief and practice from which one has now departed. And I say that the second great mountain of our national sins is to be found in our sins of horrible religious apostasy.

Our sins of falling away from the principles of revealed religion. Now if there is anything which God detests and abhors with holy detestation and righteous indignation, it is the turning away from light and from privilege. Whether that is the light of general revelation or the more special light of special revelation.

We saw last night from Romans chapter 1 how much God hates and detests apostasy from general revelation. For it's in Romans 1 that we read, as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them up. Those who turn from the worship of God according to the light of general revelation and turn to the worship of idols, God so detests apostasy even from general revelation that he gives men over to the lust of their hearts until they destroy themselves in their sins of lawlessness and of sensuality.

But if God detests apostasy from general revelation, then how much more intense is his detestation of apostasy from special revelation. That is a turning aside, a falling away, not merely from the light of himself given in creation and stamped upon the consciousness of man made in his image, but from the light of his own word is found within the pages of the scriptures of the old. And just as surely as the history of the pagan nations is a constant revelation of the general history of the nation of Israel is the sickening saga of the divine hatred and detestation.

Listen to the statement of the prophet Jeremiah with respect to this very point. In Jeremiah, we read the following words, Jeremiah chapter 25, beginning with verse three from the 13th year of Josiah, the son of Ammon, king of Judah, even unto this day, these three and 20 years, the word of the Lord has come unto me and I have spoken unto you rising up early and speaking, but you have not hearkened and the Lord has sent unto you all his rising up early and sending them. But you have not hard to hear saying, return you now everyone from his evil way, even forevermore.

Yet you have not hearkened unto me, Seth, the Lord, that you may provoke me to anger with the work of your hands to your own hurt, because you have not heard my words. Behold, I will send and take all the families of the North sayeth the Lord. And I will send unto Nebuchadnezzar the king and we'll bring him against this land, all these nations round about it.

And I will utterly destroy hissing and upon this land Fundamentally, this, they apostatized privileges and that detestation and anger activity of the people of God in Babylon. And according to the New Testament, it in the utter destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, according to the word of our Lord in Luke 19 verses 41 to 40, Paul in first 16. Wrath has come upon that nation to the because they knew not the time of their visitation to see back to national repentance back to the until they were ultimately brought to the place of death.

These incidents in the word of God revealed something of a horrible nature. Now someone asked Pastor Martin, you have told us we dare not make an equation between Israel and the United States. What does

all of this say to us? Well, I trust the Romans.

One passage says much to us and that its message is obvious, but there is also a print since God is the sovereign direct. It is God that decreed and then secured the tremendous measure of gospel light and privilege, which we have known 16 verses six through 10. It is the Holy Spirit who suffers the apostle not to enter a whole new witness.

It is the spirit of Jesus who suffers him not to go one direction and directs him in another. And so amidst all the nations of the earth, when gospel light comes and when that light comes with unusual intensity and when that nation is blessed with the scriptures in its own language, blessed with the visible church, blessed with institutions that are framed by the word of God has been the recipient of us in bringing this tremendous privilege, as it were, both its illuminating and warming influence over that nation's life and experience. And surely this has been true of our nation, perhaps as in the think of our founding fathers.

Don't ever forget particularly young people for you won't be taught this history books rich. We had 150 years of magic 1620. Our forefathers arrived on these shores and whatever we may say about the weaknesses of our purity, the fact that they did not see as clearly as we see the principles of the separation of church.

And we perhaps believe many of us that their ultimate eschatological vision that is their vision of a situation in which righteousness would prevail as the dominant characteristic among the nations that we may feel that it was exegetically and theologically the defects and the blemishes and the perspective of our Puritan forefathers, which we would not emulate. Surely my brothers and sisters, it is accurate to say that in spite of some of these minor irregularities, the heart of Puritanism that beat within the breast of these people was the desire to live in the field and gladly to welcome the impunity and of national life. That's the climate in which this nation was born.

Our Puritan forefathers longing to carve out an identity and a soul and a national experience that surely this was true. I am not so naive nor ignorant historically to say that even the majority of our consciously evangelical Christians or reformed Christians, but this much can be said, some of the most strategic men as to the framing of our constitution were men whose thinking about government and particularly about the framing of our government was tremendously influenced by rocked ribbed Calvinistic theology and many who were not Christians, many who wouldn't claim no adherence to the evangelical faith in which there was a general perspective of regard to and to God as the one who alone make it that which they longed it should be and therefore woven into the very fabric of stat, you find biblical principles. Then surely as we look at the founding of our original institutions, do you know why do you know why Dartmouth was formed as a Dartmouth was formed to trade? Yale was Princeton was formed out of the to see the outpost and came out of the and in our early national life, the appointment of chaplains to our courts and to our halls of legislation, what a reflection of and it is nothing just amendment and tries to use it as a justification to make us an aggressively godless nation that was never the intent of the framers of those words, the sovereign rule of God nation.

And then we think of the influence of Whitfield. It's a tragic thing to think that the nation that now welcomes that piation that welcomed Whitfield throughout all the colonies and wherever Whitfield went, he went to lead them to the feet of a pierced Christ, the needy sinner in that embrace of, I say, the great sin of our sin of our lasting aside. Oh, God knows in its native beauty and in the continuous blessing of God, this nation has been blessed with megawatts that burned and etched as it were into the consciousness of this nation

as it came from in the 1600s.

That work was continued as God raised up mighty preachers and God raised up whole delight and salt upon every destination. We have never been a Christian nation in the sense that the majority were in vital union with Christ, but we were a nation. Mark and in that business, a direct influence of the gospel through revivals.

So widespread was the indirect influence of the gospel in the leavening influence of that gospel that it was true consciousness exalted this nation. Our sin is a reproach to us, not only our moral. Now, how has that apostasy manifested itself? I turn you now to Jeremiah chapter two for a text that will constitute the framework of the remainder of my message.

As I try to descend now from the theology that justifies my declaration to the specific applications of that exposition, Jeremiah, the second chapter, and hear the prophet crying out in the name of Jehovah, God of his people, says Jeremiah two and verse 12. Perhaps we can back up to verse 10. Have a nation changed its gods, which yet are no gods.

He asked the question, do you see fickleness among the pagan nations they worship what they call gods, but are not gods. And yet you can count on them to be consistent in their worship of their false gods. And you could in Jeremiah's day say that the nation of Babylon, the other nations, the heathen nations of the earth were identified with the worship of this false God or that false God or another false God.

And you didn't have to worry that if you made the statement on Monday, you would be proven wrong on Wednesday. He asked the question, have you ever heard of a nation changing its so-called, but my people have changed their glory. That is the true God for that which does not profit.

Be astonished. Oh, you heavens at this and be horribly afraid. Be desolate says the Lord for my people.

They've done something that the pagan nations have not done. My people have committed two evils. Evil number one, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, a living bubbling spring of pure, clear, refreshing water and have hewn them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Now what's the picture? Try to envision what the prophet is saying. Here is a man who has in his backyard a bubbling spring. And when it comes up out of the earth, because of the natural system of filtration that is there in terms of the subterranean rock structure and all of the rest, that water is clinically and chemically analyzed as being the nearest thing to pure water upon the faces.

It has no impurities. It has an excellent balance in terms of the minerals. It has the proper content of the saline and all of the rest.

It is a fountain of living water and any thirsty person who wants his thirst assuaged and never need fear that he will be poisoned or in any way harmed. All he needs to do is go and plunge his thirsty mouth into that fountain of living water. Now here's the picture.

A man goes out one day to this fountain of living waters that springs up very naturally from his backyard and he takes two or three yards of concrete and a yard is three by three by three. You can carry about a third of a yard in a big wheelbarrow. I know that.

And he goes to that fountain of living waters, digs around it, seeks to place a cap upon it and then he has three yards of concrete poured over the top of it and utterly stops. And then having done that he goes further in his yard and there he finds a big boulder and he takes a little mason's hammer and he begins to chip away at the boulder and he's tipping and chipping and chipping and after a while he's got a little indentation and it gets a little larger and a little larger. And just about that time we come by and we say to him, man, what in the world are you doing upon the earth? And you say, but don't you know that that rainwater coming down through the atmosphere picks up all kinds of impurities from the pollution in the air? Don't you know that anyone could come by and put something into that water? And the man says, I know what I'm doing, leave me alone.

And he chips and chips and chips for the last in the process. In chipping too hard at one spot there's a crack and a fissure goes right down through his big boulder. And then as he chips further on another side another crack goes through and then the moment of truth comes when the first rains descend and though it holds the water for a few moments it isn't long before it all leaks out.

Why? Because it is a broken cistern that can hold. Now you kids tell me, if you had a neighbor like that what would you say was his problem? Eh? You'd say he had a few bricks less than a full load upstairs. Now you might not do it to his face but you'd say the guy's crazy.

Why would anyone forsake a fountain of living natural bodily purity? It's madness! That's exactly what religious apostasy is. God came to Israel and gave himself to her. The sins, all that was needed to assuage the thirst of the mind for reality was there.

She poured three chipped out of boulders. I say that's a picture in principle of how apostasy works whenever a special revelation to a nation and that nation rejects that and chips that can never hold water. Let me point out some of these broken cisterns that constitute the undeniable evidence of our national sin of apostasy in the realm of religious truth.

There is first of all the broken cistern of decadent humanism. Now we use the word humanism frequently but do we know what it means? Let me give you the relatively simple definition found in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary. Humanism is, quote, a modern non-theistic, that means it rules out God, a modern non-theistic rationalistic, that means you go no further than your own noggin, a modern non-God rationalistic movement that holds that man is capable of self-fulfillment, ethical conduct, etc., without recourse to supernaturalism.

In other words, humanism is that approach to who I am, how I'm meaning in life, is that system all I need to God. It is a closed system in which man is both a sinner and a sinner. Now you see in the early days of our national life from our Puritan forefathers even to our founding fathers, many of whom were not evangelical Christians, to the original institutions, to the very fabric and perspective of our national life, we were a theistic nation that believed over and above what man purposes, over and above what man plans, over and above what man can accomplish stands Almighty God.

And when man asks the question, who am I, he must look outside of himself to the God who made him, to give him the answer, and he's given it in his word. How should I live? Man must not look within because he recognized that within was a nature that led him in the direction of sin and perversity. He looked outside of himself to the changeless character of God who has etched, as it were, the liniments of his character in his own changeless, eternal, moral law.

And so the Ten Commandments, whether with saved or unsaved people, became, as it were, the framework of the consciousness of national morality. Now what has happened? We have forsaken the living fountain, that bubbling fountain of knowledge of ourselves and of right and of wrong and of personal identity that has been forsaken. And in its place, we have hewn out the broken cistern of a decadent humanism.

Man's mind is made the measure of all reality. Humanism says, connect electrodes to your head and we'll find out who you are. Dissect you on the tape.

We'll watch the patterns of other. He can find out who he is, why he's here, what's right, what's wrong. Sorry thing.

If all we can expect in terms of our individual experience, in terms of our family experience, in terms of community experience, in terms of national experience, if man is not only the measure of reality, then, dear people, what can creatures the likes of you and of me? What a tragic apostasy has occurred, an apostasy in which we have forsaken the fountain, in which the consciousness in our nation was that man was indeed, man indeed was distinctly and qualitatively different from the beast of the earth. And man was answerable to God. There was a judgment to come and because they knew eternity was stamped upon their very being.

Oh, what a tragic thing. This apostasy from the living fountain of the knowledge of God to the broken cistern of decadent humanism that can hold no water. But then I hasten on to point to a second specific indication of this religious apostasy.

It's what I'm calling the broken system of deceptive liberalism. The broken cistern of deceptive liberalism. Now, I'm not speaking of political liberalism, but I'm speaking of religious liberalism.

That is the situation in which so-called Christian churches and denominations hold the name and the forms and the rituals of Christianity, and even in many places still the hymnody of Christianity, but they have rejected everything that is distinctively Christian according to the Bible. There has been a rejection of the infallibility and inerrancy of this blessed book. It is no longer looked upon as the deposit of the revealed mind of God, who in gracious self-revelation has spoken and embodied his words in a book.

It is looked upon as the fallible, error-ridden, pathetic account of man's developing and changing religious conduct. No longer is there a view of man that he is essentially and fundamentally evil. Having fallen in Adam, each man and woman, boy or girl, conceived in sin, born with a positive bent to evil, and that from within, out of a heart, proceed evil thoughts, adultery, murder, fornication, theft, pride, and all other forms of wickedness.

No longer is there the confession of and belief in a supernatural Savior, who is as much man as though he were not God, as much God as though he were not man. No longer any conviction with respect to the virgin conceived, theanthropic person, the great mystery of godliness that in the Lord Jesus is true, essential, undiminished humanity joined to pure, and in him, and in him alone. Liberalism has jettisoned an infallible Bible, jettisoned a depraved man, jettisoned a supernatural Savior, jettisoned the heart of the gospel, which is penal substitution.

The only and so righteous is the God of the Bible, that he will not forgive in a way that stains his holiness, his righteousness, or his justice. Fulfillment of eternal, redeeming love, consistent with the rectitude of his

nature, of his own beloved Son, and made that heart, until under the, the immolation, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Liberalism has no answer to that question. Liberalism won't even approach.

There was a time when in our land, the great denominations, the great Presbyterian denomination that is now again reunited after all these years of separation since the Civil War, most of the great Baptist denominations, the Wesleyan, the Methodist denominations, even the Episcopalian denominations, by and large back even as recent as the early to mid-1800s, men could exchange pulpits from these denominations in the confidence that whoever stood to preach would hold to the essentials of mainstream historic evangelicalism, an infallible Bible, a supernatural Savior, a depraved sinner, a supernatural salvation based upon the bloodletting of the one who became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him, the last sinning God for the evangelical and reformed denominations that have come to birth in recent days. The tragedy is, dear people, and oh may you never forget it, sitting in the warmth and sleep and lulled in the lap of liberalism. And I say this sin of religious apostasy is our national shame.

Then I want to touch very briefly on the third and then more fulsomely on the fourth and final. We have turned to the broken cistern of demonic occultism and astrology. You say, where in the world does that fit as a national sin? Well, I remind you of what we read in Deuteronomy chapter 18.

We looked at Deuteronomy 19 last night. But in the previous chapter we have, to my knowledge, the only other explicit reference to the key reason for God casting out the inhabitants of the land of Canaan before the children of Israel. You remember in Leviticus 19, God said that the land vomited out the inhabitants because of the sins of sensuality and sexual perversion.

In Deuteronomy 18, God says in verse 9, when you come into the land which the Lord gives you, you shall not learn to do after the abomination of those nations. There shall not be found with you anyone that makes his son or daughter to pass through the fire, one that uses divination, one that practices augury or an enchanter or a sorcerer or a charmer or a consulter with familiar spirit or a wizard or a necromancer. For whosoever does these things is an abomination unto the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord God does drive them out from before you.

Non-covenanted nations, because of the law of general revelation, are to know from the heavens his everlasting power and divinity. There is but one true and living God, and there is to be no seeking to consort with familiar spirits and the demonic elements of the occult. And further on, though time does not permit us to turn to it, in 2 Kings 17, 14 to 18, there is a condemnation of the worshipping of the stars of heaven.

And again in the prophet Jeremiah, God addresses himself to what we would now call the science of astrology. Whoever would have thought that the daily papers of some of the smallest towns in our nation as well as the great metropolises would have a daily column for Gene Dixon. And we've gotten so accustomed to it we're no longer shocked are we? We can flip through the paper and in the corner of our eye see Gene Dixon.

Have you lost the ability to feel a shudder of horror that our foolish broken cistern of the demonic occult and of astrology? Millions of Americans before they have their first cup of coffee turn to the astrology number. We have become a nation that is giving over to the occult and to astrology. Ouija boards are sold by the millions.

Satan cults are being established by the schools. Satan worship is becoming a matter of public discussion and books are being written to initiate men and women and boys and girls into the marvelous world of Satan worship. My people have committed two evils.

Imagine a nation with the light of a translated Bible and the privilege of public preaching of that Bible. The nation of my unborn but I come finally and here I speak most painfully and most reluctantly and for some of you who do not know me personally I do not often make any personal references in preaching. I think the best compliment was ever paid to me by a man who met me once and said I've listened to hundreds of your tapes but I don't know anything about you.

I said wonderful but we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord. But I want to tell you something let someone say well this is just Pastor Martin giving vent to his own peculiar personality trait. Listen to me.

When God put me together in my mother's womb he put together one of the most sensitive fearful little creatures the world has ever seen. I am so constitutionally averse to confrontation that when I was big enough to go down to the sandlot and play football with the guys who were a little older than I. My mother loves to remind me of this story that the first time I went down and said hey guys can I play and they said nah you can't play. You know what I did? I didn't fight.

I came home balling with my shoulder pads hung over my shoulder. A short time after I was 12 or 13 and I made a shoe shine box and I went downtown in Stamford Connecticut and set up my corner. It wasn't long before another kid came by and said what are you doing here this is my corner and I went home and cried all the way home.

When a teacher would rebuke me for something in grammar school I'd be sick to my stomach for two days.

And to this day God is witness I have the most intense aversion to anything that borders on confrontation and it is only the word of God impregnating my spirit that gives me any grace to speak boldly and plainly the truth of God and it's that pressure that brings me to this fourth and final cistern that is the evidence of our tragic national sin of religious apostasy and it is this we have turned from the living water the living fountain of a vibrant and I say it in the truest biblical sense Pentecostal spirit infused living evangelicalism in doctrine and in practice we have turned from that which was our national heritage under the ministry of Whitfield and the tenants and Blair and a host of lesser lights we have turned from the living fountain of days of mighty visitations of the Holy

Ghost in the 1800s in the earlier period and you know what we've turned to we've turned to the broken cistern of a weak man-centered flesh-pleasing fad-conforming self-flattering evangelicals and I don't say those words to appear clever I've chosen them carefully and with a broken heart we've turned to the broken cistern of a weak man-centered flesh-pleasing fad-conforming self-flattering evangelicalism an evangelicalism marked by a professed adherence to an infallible bible a supernatural savior man as a sinner in need of supernatural grace but the message that is preached and the climate in which it is preached negates the profession that is adhered think of the message that is popular throughout evangelicalism in our day a message that lacks the cutting edge of a clear denunciation of

the prevailing sins of the evangelical community who are the popular preachers in our day the preachers of health wealth and prosperity gospel the president of fuller seminary writes a commendable blurb on the heretical which he sent to me and to every preacher whose name he could get do you know what dr

schiller's reformation is simply this we need to reinterpret the entire christian message the cross is no longer the revelation of the righteous character of god and of his holy anger against sin no longer is it his declaration that he so abhors the sinner in his state of pollution and impenitent and yet so loves him with a redemptive love that he will rescue him by means of the vicarious bloodletting of the son of god oh no you know what the message of the cross is it's the message of

unconditional love god so loves you my friend no matter what you are and where you are if you would only believe he loves you as much as he does you begin to love yourself and loving yourself you will become a new creature that's regeneration and the way you learn that great truth is look at the cross in spite of all you think about yourself god has such a high estimation of you jesus died look at the cross not as the place where god reveals his righteousness his holiness his justice his burning hate i say that filthy rotten is our national the charismatic movement by and large and this is not a blanket condemnation of all charismatics but it is nothing but thumb sucking religious self-gratification get your tingles get your thrills get your baptism know that what in god's name does that

our national sin is the sin of the broken cistern of this decadent evangelicalism this of our evangelicals a stranger to holy morning and i'm not in any way this morning if the scripture says there is a time to laugh and there is a time to weep but this evangelicalism has no place for weeping in fact it lives in morbid dread lest it should give the slightest impact and this foolish evangelicalism lives in more its message lacks a clarion call to deep and thorough repentance everything is slick you admit this admit that admit that do this after you're in no waiting for any evidence that god has plowed a man's heart giving him a sight of his own sin that sickens him enough to vomit it out for that's what repentance is it is the vomit in which the sin that i took in and i tasted every morsel

with relish and i held it in my mouth as it passed over the taste buds of the soul repentance is that work of god in which i now and i spew out with disgust that which i took in with delight but current evangelicalism knows nothing of a message that calls to that deep and thorough repentance thirdly in its message it lacks a call to radical to it doesn't call to cross-bearing and self-denial and buffeting the body and plucking out right eyes and cutting off right hands it calls to a life of simply trust jesus in all his well recutless with his golf clubs and he says i never thought i could be a success no call to radical that's why this is the evangelicalism that takes the half converted football player and the moment he twitches a finger in the direction of jesus rushes him up to the

platform and thinks that the glory of christ needs his broad shoulders and his bulging neck and so he's held before people as the great model of what the grace of god can do and goes out the next day and encourages 40 million people to profane the sanctity of the lord's day and then he's quoted monday morning as blowing his cork and using his hells and dams along with everyone else and who has the chance to refuse to conform to the holy law you feel uncomfortable with that and those came to john the baptist and said what must we do to bring forth fruits for repentance what did he tell them a bunch of general innocuous things no sir he said you soldiers you know what your key sins are crumbling about your wages taking advantage of your uniform now stop it be content with your wages the

publicans don't take any more than belongs to you he went after their sins some broad shouldered all america comes into this building tonight and says to me preacher i've begun to study my bible and i see i'm a sinner and i'm lost and on my way to hell what do i do i point him to christ point him to the way of a savior who died for sinners and then point him to the path of repentance and when he says but man what will that mean for me i'll tell him what it means it means it stops you stop your whoring around and all the

silly women that go after you like animals in heat you're done with them and the first one that makes an approach to you you say to her look girl i'm done with that my body's a and then i tell him look man from the time you were in the pop warner league you were made

asking me if you can go out and worship that god on the but man i don't know what to do dig ditches till you can do something more you can dig them i dug ditches to pay my tuition to get some tools to go to the ministry and i'm sick and tired of athletes saying well i've got this ability to bury the offensive tackle i got this ability to bury the halfback how does he sanctify that for jesus this woolly headed thinking there's very little place for cynicism and sarcasm but there is a place and i believe it's right here oh the apostasy of an evangelicalism that is afraid to call people to a life of radicalism not only is it seen in the message but i close and this is my final word in the climate of the church life itself according to the scriptures in wood that i had time to develop this

through the early chapters of acts that which characterized the church in the flush of that outpouring of the spirit was the presence of god fear came upon all they were filled with joy and with the holy ghost they were all of one accord no man dared join himself to them but the lord added such as should be saved and they were walking in the fear of god and in the comfort of the holy ghost and the disciples were multiplied of the church in its period of great blessing and what is our decadent evangelicalism marked by now they have the mentality that when sinners come in we ought to make them feel at ease and comfortable so the minister stands up and says it's lovely to have all you lovely people here you're lovely we're lovely everybody turn around shake hands have a little tugging

serious and sober and then we have a little chorus and then we have a little entertainment have a few solos few duets and few quartets and i'm not saying that all special music is entertainment don't anyone go up i'm serious because usually the only ones who would go out and say it are those for whom it is entertainment and i've touched a raw nerve you don't like it but the great majority of the so-called special music in evangelical churches is nothing but entertainment you know the proof of it look at the christian recording business it's a multi-million even billion dollar people want to be entertained with the world's mood and with paul says when the unbeliever comes amongst you what should strike him first corinthians 14 25 the thoughts of his heart are laid bare and he falling down

up will cry out god is of a truth among you what should be the dominant characteristic of our public gatherings whether the expression is the exuberance of holy joy whether it is the more sober spirit of holy mourning whether it is the intense spirit of rapt attention to the word of god in the full range of holy emotions and the bible recognizes it's not just a bunch of people in the same place singing the same songs hearing the same preacher there is a person that thought rarely if ever enters the average evangelical church so long as the bills are paid and the people are happy and the program is up to snuff all is well my dear people how long will god bear with this that's what happened in israel didn't it read the first chapter of isaiah read the 58th chapter of isaiah they were keeping

all their meetings and even had more than god required they had their feast of the new moons they had their fast days they were sacrifice i wash you make you clean put away the evil of your doings from before your eyes and i believe if there is a word of god to the apostate evangelical world in our day it is that away with meetings and all of our first thing he'll do if he comes he'll come and he'll purge the sons of levi he'll come like he came to that temple in jerusalem he brought those strands together into a scourge and the son of god i said my father's house shall be what a house of prayer intimate communion with god and sad to say one can get almost anything he wants in the average evangelical church but the sense it's not a

pleasant picture is it dear people but i say this is our

great second national sin what do we do we cry to god what do we do we start in our own hearts you leaders here you start with your own fellow overseers we start with searching and trying our ways we cry to god we pray that god may yet send jonah's to the minibus of our land and i use that incident purposely non-covenanted nation and someone came out of the covenant nation the parallel in our day would be out of the church who addressed the pagan city and from the king down to the animals they put on sackcloth and ashes and they had a national repentance and a national restoration to righteousness it doesn't mean every individual was saved but many were because jesus said they're going to rise up on the day of judgment and condemn the people of his own generation many were saved and many

others had their sins checked and for three generations the judgment pronounced upon minerva was withheld as a fruit of that revival i commend the book of jonah for your prayerful study as part of the answer of what we ought to pray that god will do in this dark and needy hour thank you for your attentiveness i've preached far longer than i had hoped to planned to but in a sense it's your fault you threw it out of me may god grant that your heart will enfold the word and that fruit will be born to god's glory let us pray our father we are all before your eye the eye which runs to and fro throughout the whole earth not looking for the clever not looking for the gifted not looking for the influential and for the great ones but you have said that your eye runs to and fro throughout the whole

earth to show yourself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect towards you father oh holy father if you are the god who delights to take the weak things to confound the mighty the things which are not to take and to put to naught the things that are if you are the god who delights to take the despised oh lord we give ourselves to you tonight look upon this company of nobodies look upon us with all of our weakness and our non-entityness look upon us oh lord and find in us by your grace hearts that are perfect towards you hearts that burn with jealousy for your glory hearts that cannot be content to see the putrid moral degeneracy and the horrible religious apostasy and simply pass on as though it didn't exist oh god break our hearts give us believing hearts give us prevailing

hearts and may it please you yet in wrath to remember mercy oh lord we are before you look upon us in grace and pity for the sake of your well beloved son remember his groans remember his cry remember your promise that he would see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied lord remember all of your covenant engagements to him and for his dear name's sake arise oh god and visit us in mercy amen

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